

Re: Opposition to HB 2305

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Anderson and Breese-Iverson, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Hannah Alzgal and I am the Housing Justice Policy Coordinator for the statewide nonprofit, Unite Oregon. I am writing to urge you to oppose HB 2305, which would destabilize tenants and put them at risk of eviction and displacement in an already brutal housing market.

Our organization is led by Black, Indigenous, immigrants and refugees, rural communities, and people experiencing poverty. We were founded on the premise of mobilizing with the capacity to advance racial justice in various areas, including housing.

Oregonians across the state, including some of our members, have shared their stories about losing a home and becoming homeless. This is a horrific experience that feeds into the poverty cycle. Rents across the state have increased significantly and it has become nearly impossible for people to keep up with the true cost of living, especially low-income communities of color. Communities already facing historical and systemic barriers to jobs, housing, health care, opportunity and wealth are paying an unfair price. When housing takes up more than half of your income, it takes one incident to push you over the edge and a majority of Oregonians are just one paycheck short of facing homelessness.

HB 2305 would undermine tenant stability and increase displacement. It would open up the statutes to create broad loopholes that landlords could exploit to increase evictions. These loopholes will lead to greater possibilities of discriminatory enforcement and fair housing violations.

Landlords already have myriad tools to evict tenants for lease violations and for repeated lease violations, often with little notice. When evictions happen in this housing market, they lead to homelessness. We must do all we can to prevent unfair displacement.

This is a time when we must come together to support solutions to the housing crisis, not backward steps. I urge you to **vote against HB 2305** and hope you will focus on the collective and critically important work to increase housing supply, support preservation and affordable housing solutions, support eviction prevention and rent assistance solutions, and increased access to supportive services and shelter.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and your service to Oregon communities.

Sincerely,
Hannah Alzgal, Housing Justice Policy Coordinator
Unite Oregon